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POLICY, TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4501**

July 21, 2006

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**GOVERNMENT REFORM**

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NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS,  
AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
WELLNESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

OFFICER:  
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The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
2138 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
2138 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Sensenbrenner and Ranking Member Conyers:

As your Committee begins to plan summer hearings on immigration reform and border security, we respectfully ask you to consider holding northern border field hearings on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI).

As you know, Section 7209 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 requires the Departments of Homeland Security and State to implement a plan that will require travelers re-entering the U.S. from Canada to present documents denoting both identity and citizenship.

Unfortunately, DHS and State have proposed that all travelers carry a passport or a vaguely defined \$55 travel card, commonly referred to as the Pass card. These documents are prohibitively expensive and difficult to obtain for many American families. In addition, the Government Accountability Office and former 9/11 Commissioner, Slade Gorton, have questioned whether the proposed WHTI regulations will have the intended security benefit.

American-Canadian border crossings account for \$1.2 billion a day in trade, which supports 5.2 million jobs. More than 29 million people cross the U.S.-Canadian border each year for tourism or shopping alone. Unless DHS and State change course, WHTI could close our borders to legitimate trade and travel. Accordingly, it is imperative that the Judiciary Committee hold one or more northern border field hearings on WHTI this summer. Such hearings will allow the Committee to evaluate DHS and State's WHTI proposal and consider the economic consequences should the program be poorly implemented. In addition, the Committee will be able to examine first-hand WHTI's potential impact on the inspections process and cross-border travel.

These border hearings should also take a look at bi-partisan legislation that recently passed the Senate as part of its Immigration Reform bill to delay the implementation of the WHTI for 17 months until June 1, 2009, and to cap the cost of the card for adults at \$34 (with a recommended fee of \$24) and charge no fee for children. The hearings could also serve as a vehicle for discussion of H.R. 5536, introduced in the House by Representatives Louise Slaughter and John McHugh.

We hope your Committee will examine WHTI at a northern border field hearing this summer. We appreciate your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

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